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ABSTRACT

A model for enhancing the educational effectiveness of an African university was developed through the West Virginia University-Bayero University, Kano (Nigeria) linkage activities carried out from 1984-1988. The three goals of the model were to: further develop abilities of African university faculty to carry out research, curriculum development, and service activities; provide workshops, seminars, and courses at the home institution to help with faculty development; and expand the knowledge and experience of faculty and students in an exchange program. Project activities were focused by an Education Development Center, the purpose of which was advancement of knowledge and understanding of education and educational development in the university's service area. Faculty at the African university collected and continue to collect documents and materials for placement in the center. Significant increases in library space and holdings were reported at the African university site. In working with an African university, it is important to involve both African and American university staff as equal partners, and the use of coordinating committees at both sites is an appropriate mechanism for doing so. Setting up such a center is also a productive way to achieve program goals. The center focuses activities towards specific goals and encourages the interaction necessary to work toward change and development. (SM)

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Enhancing the Educational Effectiveness of an African University

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Enhancing the Educational Effectiveness of an African University

A model for enhancing the educational effectiveness of an African university was developed through the West Virginia University-Bayero University, Kano (Nigeria) linkage activities carried out under the aegis of the United States Information Agency from 1984-1988. The goals of the model are:

1. To further develop abilities of African university faculty to carry out research, curriculum development, and service activities.
2. To provide workshops, seminars and courses at the home institution to increase the professional knowledge and expertise of African university faculty in their fields. The desired outcome of this goal is the increase of the capabilities of university faculty to more fully participate in the curriculum, instruction, and research activities of the university.
3. To expand the knowledge and experience of university faculty and students in an exchange program through: a) interaction of university faculty who will be teaching and involved in professional development at both the African and American universities and b) research and field work both types of university faculty will carry out at their home and host universities.

4. To continue over long term and expand linkages between universities. The desired outcome of this goal will be self directed faculty development with increased emphasis on African cultures and issues with resultant changes evident in programs, courses, and research directions at the African university.

Introduction

The model utilizes a Coordinating Committee located at the African university and another located at the U.S. university both of whom should be under the guidance of a director. These committees support efforts and identify expertise needed to ensure that the individual components of the effort are maintaining communications and working cooperatively.

Overview of Major Annual Activities

The model describes activities over a four year period, including a planning year and three years of project activity. These may be condensed into a three year period as feasible.

Planning Year Activities. Appoint coordinating committees and ask them to plan for a first set of inservice workshops at the African university . Plan the first visits of U.S. faculty.

First Year. Conceptualize the project. Carry out a needs assessment at both universities. Give seminars to faculty at both universities to orient them to the project.

Fully establish the coordinating committees and have them identify needed subcommittees. These will change as the project develops. The coordinating committees should meet with faculty and further specify the goals

of the project. Assign tasks to individual faculty members and subcommittees. Outline task activities and develop a system of evaluating various components of the process.

Second year. Implement goals of the project. Conduct staff development at both institutions. Carry out curriculum development, initial evaluation of components of the project, and research.

Third year. Complete some of the research efforts initiated under the project. Continue staff development efforts and curriculum development. Submit proposals for further funding. Evaluate the project. Plan and begin dissemination of the results of the project.

The Education Development Center

It is suggested that project activities be focused through organizing them in a center. The primary purpose of the center is the advancement of knowledge and understanding of education and educational development in the university's service area.

Goal of the Center

The primary activities of the center are to enhance the practical and applied endeavors of the faculty in order that it may become an effective leader. The ultimate effect lies in increasing the effectiveness of classroom teaching at all educational levels.

The Center should first, gather, collate, and analyze educational information for effective use. Second, it should also provide information and human and material resources to help in understanding, solving problems, and enhancing the potential of present teaching practices. Third, it should

provide ideas, effort, and personnel to advance teaching effectiveness suited to the needs of the peoples and environment of its service area.

Structure of the Center

While a center may have a more complex structure, its basic format should be:

Faculty (College or University-wide)

Coordinating Committee

Center Coordinator

Secretary

Center Attendants

Faculty. The Center should be established at the university in premises which give it a physical identification. The faculty advise and supervise the activities of the center. All its programs and activities should be approved by the faculty before implementation.

Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee is comprised of members of the faculty. It is vested with the responsibility of policy formulation, and development of programs and activities for general upkeep and development of the center.

Center Coordinator. The main function of the Center Coordinator is to coordinate the activities of the Center including advising the Coordinating Committee on the general status of the Center and maintaining equipment and materials.

Secretary. The secretary carries out the day to day administration of the Center.

Center Attendants. These individuals care for the Center, keeping materials in their proper places and making sure it is cleaned. They also assist all those who use the Center either for research or in seeking information.

Functions of the Center

Resources. The Center provides a mechanism to enable professionals and others who have a need for education, training information, and services to carry out research for their special needs. Research services involve using book, journal, pamphlet, unpublished research document, and microfiche sources. Seminars are given relating to the resources of the Center and procedures to assist individuals in using them. A reference system should be developed for the total system of resources. This is done through: 1) hard copy reference catalogs, monographs on specialized topics, and 2) computer databases. Continuing efforts should obtain current and dated relevant resource materials from federal government agencies, national groups, state Ministries, and local agencies. This is in addition to the collections already in existence at the university and other universities. Efforts should also be made to obtain or develop annotated references of relevant resources already in collections at neighboring universities. Products of research performed by the university staff, relevant to the Center in general, or to specific themes set as goals or performed as services to clients of the Center will continually increase the Center's value to it's users.

Workshops and Conferences

Self-initiated annual conferences on special themes dealing with the goal of the Center should be planned. Conference outcomes will be the collection and publication of research and application papers presented.

Other Major Activities

Publishing. The Center should undertake publishing activities. These can include a journal, single topic pamphlets, edited multitopic handbooks, and conference proceedings. Included will be reviews of research, bibliographies of research areas, development projects, and administration policies.

Consulting. The Center should also serve as a consulting source. Research services should be carried out using university resources. Research can be carried out on client related subjects and analyzed using statistics programs on a Center microcomputer. Services the Center can provide should be advertised. The Center may also offer special workshops on topics of local interest.

Continuing Education Extension. Cooperative and continuing education extension work can be fostered by the Center. This includes extension in any area of relevance.

Results

Documents Collection

Faculty at the African university collected and continue to collect documents and materials for placement in the Center. Among the materials collected are:

* federal and state publications,
* federal and state policy statements,
* course syllabi,
* federal and state curricula,
* planning documents,
* textbooks,
* workshop materials,
* Bachelor's dissertations,
* Master's theses,
* Doctoral dissertations,
* copies of papers presented at local, state, national, and international conferences.

Research Efforts

Significant increases in library space and holdings were reported at the African university site. Large increases were found in all major components; text, journals, non-print media. Access to microcomputers for research and writing was increased.

Staff development opportunities enabled faculty and graduate students to participate in extended graduate course length offerings. The writing of scholarly papers and research significantly changed.

The Center also served as the coordinating body for research carried out by U.S. university faculty members while they were at the African university or planned at the African university and completed later. The Center worked to get individuals together and foster joint research efforts. The Center also fosters research by African faculty members. The Center conducted research to establish baseline data.

Service

The Center offers its resources for use by faculty, students, and the public. It has arranged workshops with numerous groups. Several of these were offered by visiting U.S. faculty while at the African site. Conferences have been planned and a journal published.

Research, curriculum development, and service activities cannot easily be separated. One function of the Center is to integrate them so that the Center will be responsive to educational needs serving as a leader and a clearinghouse.

Professional Training

Changes occurred during the length of the project during which a significant decline in expatriate faculty occurred, being replaced by newer, less experienced indigenous faculty. The African Coordinating Committee performed a needs assessment which determined professional training areas, place of delivery (African or U.S. site), and individuals invited to participate in the training. Areas identified as critical were research procedures, curriculum and instruction, and university extension services.

Returned African university faculty trained other faculty in several areas. These included:

* the use of microcomputers in research, writing, and administration,
* using a variety of measurement instruments,
* current approaches to educational administration,
* education extension,
* quantitative research methods,
* implementing instructional methodologies other than lecturing, and
* use of classroom simulations.

Summary

In working with an African university to enhance its educational effectiveness, it is important to involve both African and American university staff as equal partners. The use of coordinating committees at both sites is an appropriate mechanism for doing so. Setting up a Center is also a productive way to achieve program goals. The Center focuses activities towards specific goals and encourages the interaction necessary to work toward change and development.